SEPTEMBER 2011 | VOLUME 12 | NUMBER 9

CINEPLEX MAGAZINE

Inside

TAYLOR LAUTNER

MATT DAMON

NAOMI WATTS

Seth ROGEN

LAUGHS IN THE FACE OF DEATH

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GETTING EXCITED ABOUT THE TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, PAGE 22

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CONTENTS

SEPTEMBER 2011 | VOL 12 | №9

COVER STORY

42 FILM TREATMENT
When **Seth Rogen**'s friend was diagnosed with cancer, Rogen encouraged him to write a screenplay about the experience as a way to heal. Good move. Now that screenplay is a movie, with Rogen playing a version of himself
BY MARNI WEISZ

REGULARS

6 EDITOR'S NOTE
8 SNAPS
10 IN BRIEF
14 SPOTLIGHT
16 ALL DRESSED UP
18 IN THEATRES
46 RETURN ENGAGEMENT
47 CASTING CALL
48 AT HOME
50 FINALLY...

FEATURES

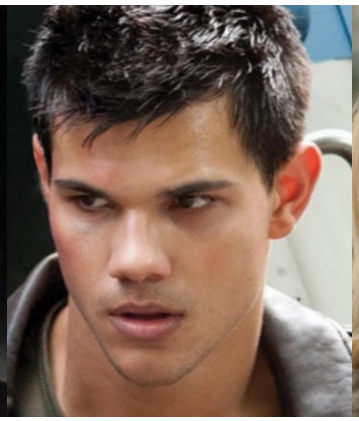
28 MOVIES & 9/11
On the 10th anniversary of the September 11th attacks we chart how the movies have dealt with that fateful day
BY MARNI WEISZ

30 FEELING FLUISH
Why **Matt Damon** couldn't wait to immerse himself in the disease-ridden thriller *Contagion*
BY BOB STRAUSS

34 TEEN HERO
With a starring role in *Abduction*, 19-year-old **Taylor Lautner** adds "action hero" to his résumé
BY AMBER NASRULLA

38 THRILL-SEEKER
Dream House star **Naomi Watts** explains why the fear of the unknown drives so many of her choices
BY ASHLEY JUDE COLLIE

COVER PHOTO BY G LANGE PHOTO/CONTOUR



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EDITOR'S **NOTE**

NAME THAT **FILM**

Making a comedy about cancer is tricky. A lot of people will tell you that there's nothing funny about cancer, and it's hard to argue with them, especially since most of those people have either had cancer or watched a loved one suffer. Others will tell you that you have to find the humour in dark situations to get you through; laughter is the best medicine and all that.

And, truth is, **Seth Rogen**'s new movie, *50/50*, isn't a laugh-out-loud cancer comedy. It's a slice-of-life movie about a guy (Joseph Gordon-Levitt) who has cancer, and it just happens to have a lot of laugh-out-loud moments. The script was, after all, written by Rogen's friend and fellow writer on *Da Ali G Show*, Will Reiser, based on Reiser's own experiences with cancer. It was Rogen who urged Reiser to write the script, and he subsequently plays a version of himself — the boorish but ultimately supportive best friend.

Now that we've established that it's hard to make a comedy about cancer, imagine having to name that film. The title has to strike just the right tone — not too light, not too heavy. It wasn't easy. In fact, the movie went through a handful of names before settling on *50/50*, including *I'm With Cancer*, *Live With It*, *Bright Side* and *Get Well Soon*. At a test screening this past March, viewers were asked for their opinions on various titles. According to an audience member who wrote a review for IMDB.com, few people liked any of the choices.

When I interviewed Rogen for this month's cover story, "Laughing Matters," page 42, he admitted this was a hard film to name, saying, "It seems that you either go into it with a title everyone loves or you're doomed to never have a title anyone likes." Then he added, "I think the tricky thing about this title is that it puts a lot on our shoulders marketing-wise to explain what the f-ck *50/50* means." So we'll help him out; the title refers to the protagonist's chance of survival.

I'm not sure what programmers at the Toronto International Film Festival think of the title, but they liked the movie enough to give it a spot in this year's Special Presentations program. *50/50* will screen at the prestigious fest just a few weeks before opening nationwide at the end of the month.

Elsewhere in this issue, **Matt Damon** tells us about his own disease-centric movie, *Contagion* (page 30), we have a Q&A with *Abduction*'s **Taylor Lautner** (page 34) and **Naomi Watts** talks about being drawn to characters in peril, like the one she plays in *Dream House* (page 38).

Also, this month marks the 10th anniversary of the September 11th attacks, so we've created a timeline (page 28) charting how the fateful day has played out on film over the decade.

And on page 22 we whet your appetite for the aforementioned Toronto International Film Festival with a look at some of the best films ever to screen at the event, and a collection of juicy snapshots from festivals past.

■ **MARNI WEISZ**, EDITOR

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JOSEPH GORDON-LEVITT SETH ROGEN ANNA KENDRICK BRYCE DALLAS HOWARD AND ANJELICA HUSTON

50/50

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SNAPS

VERY PERRY

Katy Perry, voice of Smurfette in *The Smurfs*, meets the real deal on the blue carpet at the film's New York premiere.

PHOTO BY DAVE ALLOCCA/SPE, INC.

GARFIELD'S RIDE

New Spider-Man **Andrew Garfield** looks more like the villain Vector from *Despicable Me* as he rides his Vespa in West Hollywood.

PHOTO BY SPLASH NEWS

KATE + KATE

Kate Beckinsale with her body double on the Toronto set of *Total Recall*. We *think* she's the one on the right.

PHOTO BY SPLASH NEWS

THE GOSLING STRUT

Ryan Gosling plays around with fans and a photographer after having lunch with his dog at a New York café.

PHOTO BY SPLASH NEWS

WOODY'S BREATHER

Seventy-five-year-old **Woody Allen** takes a break while **Penélope Cruz** (left) consults with crew on the Rome set of *Bop Decameron*.

PHOTO BY KEYSTONE PRESS

IN BRIEF

Cameron Crowe (left) and Eddie Vedder now and (inset) then

PEARL JAM TOAST

It's no surprise that Cameron Crowe directed *Pearl Jam Twenty*, an intimate documentary which covers the seminal grunge band's 20-year history.

It was, after all, Crowe who introduced Pearl Jam frontman Eddie Vedder to the movie world 19 years ago with the release of *Singles*, an era-defining comedy set amid the early days of the Seattle grunge scene. A babyfaced Vedder played a version of himself, and a member of Matt Dillon's band, Citizen Dick. Pearl Jam also contributed a couple of songs to the soundtrack, including the great "State of Love and Trust."

But Crowe first met Vedder and the band even earlier, when he was a Seattle-based writer for *Rolling Stone*. "I've been lucky enough to see the beginning of Pearl Jam, and follow them as a fan from Moment One," says Crowe. "It was obvious from the beginning that this was a band that mattered."

Crowe sifted through more than 1,200 hours of footage and conducted more than 24 hours of new interviews with the band's members, before whittling it down to this two-hour doc.

Pearl Jam Twenty screens at Cineplex theatres for one night only, September 20th. Go to www.cineplex.com for more information. —*MW*

On Home Turf: ELYSIUM

If you haven't already caught sight of Jodie Foster and Matt Damon (with a shaved head) shooting *Elysium* in Vancouver, there's still time. The Neill Blomkamp (*District 9*) sci-fi is scheduled to film in B.C. through the end of this month.

Little is known about the hush-hush project, but while in Toronto promoting *The Beaver* a few months ago, Foster confirmed that she'll play the leader of an alien planet.

Other actors in town for the film include Alice Braga, William Fichtner and *District 9* star Sharlto Copley. —*MW*

The Art Of Film

After quitting a job he didn't really like, Savanna, Georgia, illustrator and graphic designer Adam Sidwell needed a project. So he decided to create one illustration per week for 52 weeks, and post them to his website, http://theskid.tumblr.com. All he needed was a theme. He came up with Bad Dudes. "I thought it would be a lot more fun than 52 good guys. There's always that draw to the antagonist," says Sidwell, who admits pop culture has always been one of the biggest influences on his work. Personally, our faves are his Javier Bardem (left) in *No Country for Old Men*, and the diptych of Edward Norton and Brad Pitt from *Fight Club*. —MW

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HOME RUN CASTS

Brad Pitt (left) and Jonah Hill in *Moneyball*

Moneyball casts Brad Pitt as Billy Beane, the Oakland Athletics general manager who used a new form of statistics, rather than traditional scouting, to craft his team. But it also features a smattering of real-life ball players in acting roles. Which got us thinking, which baseball movie boasts the best cast of real-life baseball players?

Well, it isn't *Moneyball*. Its two biggest MLB players are shortstop Royce Clayton (as Miguel Tejada), who played 17 seasons in the majors and retired with a .258 batting average, and Casey Bond (as Chad Bradford), a San Francisco Giants prospect who played two seasons in the minors.

While we know there are no ties in baseball, we couldn't help but split the prize between two very different baseball movies:

MAJOR LEAGUE (1989)
Charlie Sheen stars as wild Cleveland Indians pitcher Ricky Vaughn, but the cast also includes high-profile real players like Steve Yeager, a catcher for the L.A. Dodgers who appeared in four World Series ('74, '77, '78 and '81) and won the championship in '81, and Pete Vuckovich, who pitched from '75 to '86 and won the Cy Young Award in '82.

THE PRIDE OF THE YANKEES (1942)
Gary Cooper plays New York Yankee Lou Gehrig in this classic bio-pic, which also stars real-life Yankees Bill Dickey, Bob Meusel and Mark Koenig as themselves, and the legendary Babe Ruth, whose natural hamminess acts as a counterpoint for Cooper's stoicism. —*IR*

Quote Unquote

Blanche seems so feminine and supple soft on the outside, but underneath she is as tough as nails. As soon as I got into wardrobe and started strutting around the set in Blanche's stilettos, punctuating every sentence with a pop of my bubble gum, I knew exactly how I wanted to play her.
—**CHRISTINA HENDRICKS** ON HER CHARACTER IN ***DRIVE***

FEST FRENZY!

The Toronto International Film Festival **(see our preview starting on page 22)** isn't the only movie fest in Canada this month. Check out these great events taking place from coast to coast

ATLANTIC FILM FESTIVAL
Halifax, Nova Scotia
September 15 – 24
www.atlanticfilm.com/aff

CINÉFEST SUDBURY INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
Sudbury, Ontario
September 17 – 25
www.cinefest.com

OTTAWA INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION FESTIVAL
Ottawa, Ontario
September 21 – 25
www.animationfestival.ca

MONTREAL INTERNATIONAL BLACK FILM FESTIVAL
Montreal, Quebec
September 21 – October 2
www.montrealblackfilm.com

EDMONTON INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
Edmonton, Alberta
September 23 – October 1
www.edmontonfilmfest.com

CALGARY INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
Calgary, Alberta
September 23 – October 2
www.calgaryfilm.com

VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
Vancouver, British Columbia
September 29 – October 14
www.viff.org/festival

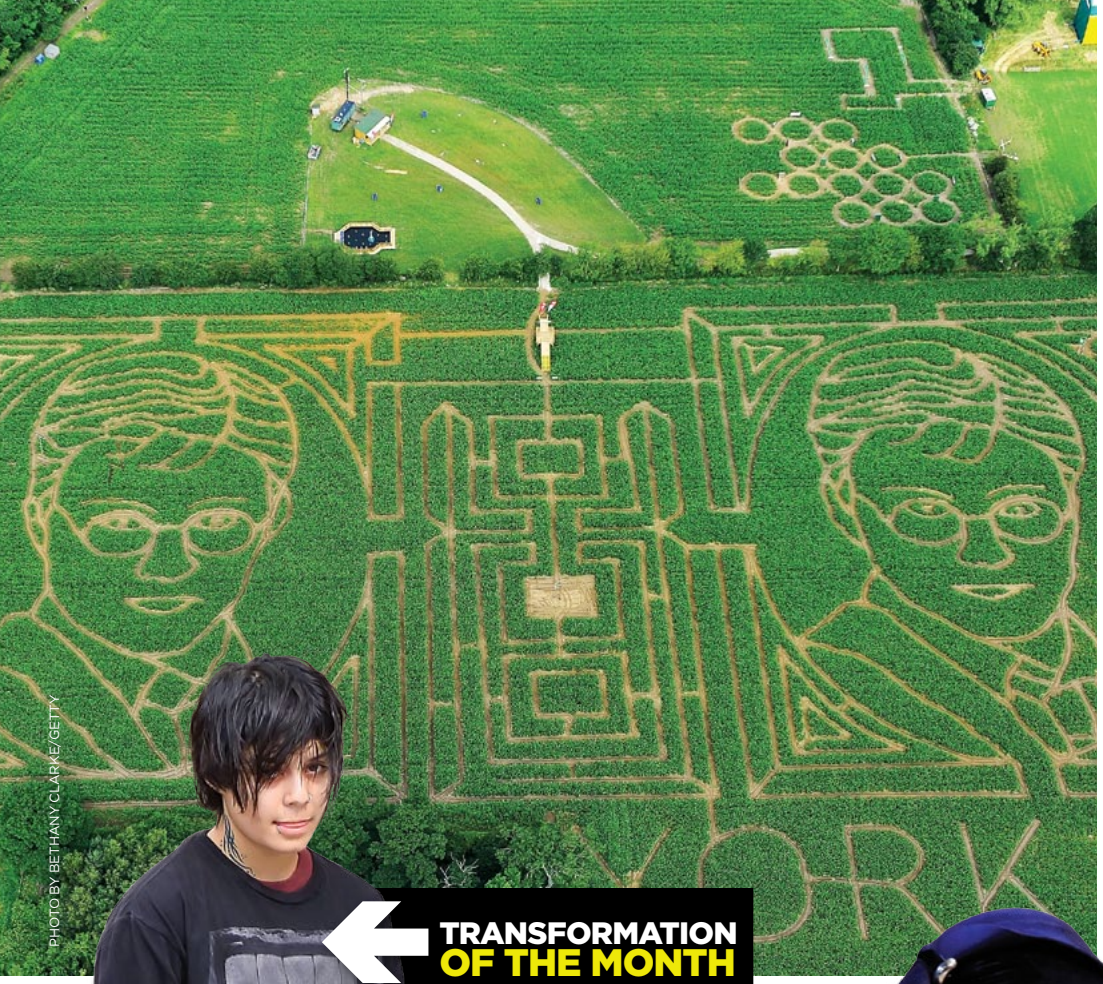

PHOTO BY BETHANY CLARKE/GETTY

GETTING LOST IN HARRY POTTER

We hope Tom Pearcy got J.K. Rowling's permission before creating this *Harry Potter* maze in his Yorkshire, England, cornfield. She's known to be very litigious.

The double-portrait of *Harry Potter* star Daniel Radcliffe includes 10 kilometres of path, and each head is more than 50 metres in diameter.

But why two Potters? The maze is also a game. Pearcy told the *Yorkshire Post*, "I wanted to do something imaginative to say farewell to Harry, so creating the biggest image of him ever made and making it a spot-the-difference competition seemed like an interesting way to do that." —*MW*

PHOTO BY JACKSON LEE/SPLASH NEWS

TRANSFORMATION OF THE MONTH

Okay Vanessa Hudgens, you've got our attention. Now's your chance to prove you can act. The young star shoots *Gimme Shelter* — in which she plays a homeless, pregnant teen — in New Jersey.

KIM CATTRALL'S PRIVATE LIVES

Sex and the City star Kim Cattrall earned raves for her performance in Noël Coward's *Private Lives* when the production premiered on London's West End. No need for a trip to England, though. This month Cattrall brings the play to Toronto's Royal Alexandra Theatre (**September 17th to October 30th**) before taking it to Broadway.

Coward's play is set in the 1930s and involves a divorced couple (Cattrall and fellow Canadian Paul Gross) who discover they're staying in the same hotel while both are on honeymoons with new partners. Worse, they still have feelings for each other.

Go to www.mirvish.com for more information. —*MW*

FUNNY THING ABOUT HOCKEY

Russell Peters really has adapted to life in L.A. — he's doing this interview while driving around the city in his convertible.

The stand-up comic and sometime actor (*Source Code*, *The Take*) actually splits time between Los Angeles and Las Vegas, two cities that bear very little resemblance to his hometown of Brampton, Ontario.

Although Peters is incredibly proud of being Canadian, and more specifically a Brampton boy ("I'm B-town for life," he says), he never took a shine to Canada's most beloved pastime, hockey.

That's interesting, since he stars in *Breakaway*, a Canadian movie about a young, hockey-crazy Indo-Canadian named Raj Singh (Vinay Virmani), who goes against his family's traditions and starts an all-Sikh hockey team.

Peters plays Sonu, an obnoxious guy who wants to take over Raj's family trucking business, and lucky for Peters, he didn't have to lace up for the role.

"I never played hockey," he says. "See, I hung around the black kids so hockey was never relevant to us. We looked at it and went, 'Well, [the players] don't look like us,' and the guys that did play hockey weren't the nicest guys in the neighbourhood, so we didn't hang around them either."

Peters may not like hockey, but he did like *Breakaway*'s script, and can vouch for the final product. "It's an across-the-board good, fun movie, and this is coming from a guy who has no interest in hockey in the first place. This is a movie I would still see even if I wasn't in it." —*INGRID RANDOJA*

BREAKAWAY
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ALL DRESSED UP

EMMA WATSON

All-out glam at the New York premiere of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows – Part 2*.

PHOTO BY SPLASH NEWS

AMANDA SEYFRIED

At San Diego's Comic-Con International to promote *In Time*.

PHOTO BY KEYSTONE PRESS

JENNIFER GARNER

Classic at the "BAFTA Brits to Watch" gala in Los Angeles.

PHOTO BY KEYSTONE PRESS

DANIEL RADCLIFFE

In New York City for the premiere of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows – Part 2*.

PHOTO BY RICHIE BUXO/SPLASH NEWS

ZOOEY DESCHANEL

The perfect dress for the L.A. premiere of *Winnie the Pooh*.

PHOTO BY KEYSTONE PRESS

CHRIS EVANS

Cool shades for *Captain America*'s premiere at Hollywood's El Capitan Theatre.

PHOTO BY KEYSTONE PRESS

IN THEATRES

SEPTEMBER 2

Sara Paxton and Dustin Milligan in *Shark Night 3D*

SHARK NIGHT 3D

Girls in bikinis and boys in shorts enjoy a weekend waterside at an estate on a Louisiana lake. But their fun and games turn deadly when a great white shark decides to reduce the sodium in its diet by dining on freshwater humans.

APOLLO 18

In this scary faux documentary by Spanish director **Gonzalo López-Gallego**, we view the apparent long-lost footage from Apollo 18, the secret NASA mission that sent astronauts back to the moon in December 1974. The grainy, black-and-white footage also suggests the astronauts weren't alone on the orbiting rock.

SEPTEMBER 9

BUCKY LARSON: BORN TO BE A STAR

Bucky's (**Nick Swardson**) nerdy life in Iowa is shaken to the core when he discovers his quiet parents were once 1970s porn stars. Believing he's genetically predisposed for the same career — although he's no Dirk Diggler — he heads to L.A. where a porn director (**Don Johnson**) transforms him into an unlikely star.

CONTAGION

Director **Steven Soderbergh** assembles a top-notch cast, including **Matt Damon**, **Kate Winslet**, **Jude Law**, **Laurence Fishburne** and **Gwyneth Paltrow**, for this thriller about a group of doctors and scientists trying to stop a deadly disease before it spreads across the globe. **See Matt Damon interview, page 30**.

WARRIOR

War hero Tommy Conlon (**Tom Hardy**) steps into the mixed martial arts cage against his older brother Brendan (**Joel Edgerton**), a retired MMA fighter-turned-school teacher who desperately needs the prize money. Hardy and Edgerton paid a physical price while making the movie — Hardy cracked his ribs, broke a toe and tore a ligament in his hand, while Edgerton tore a knee ligament.

SEPTEMBER 16

Drive's Ryan Gosling

DRIVE

Ryan Gosling and Danish director **Nicolas Winding Refn** spent nights driving around Los Angeles together preparing to make this L.A.-noir thriller about a tight-lipped Hollywood stunt driver (Gosling) who moonlights as the getaway driver for bank heists. When one heist goes wrong, a hit is put out on him. The film, which won Refn Best Director honours at this year's Cannes Film Festival, co-stars **Carey Mulligan**, **Christina Hendricks** and **Bryan Cranston**.

I DON'T KNOW HOW SHE DOES IT

Sarah Jessica Parker's first film since the critically reviled *Sex and the City 2* casts her as the perpetually exhausted Kate Reddy, a woman whose job as a fund manager doesn't leave much quality time for her husband (**Greg Kinnear**) or two children. Based on the popular novel by Welsh author **Allison Pearson**.

Sarah Jessica Parker in *I Don't Know How She Does It*

THE LION KING 3D

The highest-grossing hand-drawn animated film in history gets a 3D makeover, 17 years after it first hit theatres in 1994. Disney's classic tells the story of Simba a young lion who fights his evil uncle Scar to take his rightful place as the Lion King.

STRAW DOGS

This remake of the controversial 1971 thriller — the original included a rape scene and contained scenes of graphic violence — stars **James Marsden** as a timid man who goes into a violent, murderous rage to protect his wife (**Kate Bosworth**) and home from marauding men.

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SEPTEMBER 23

ABDUCTION

Taylor Lautner steps into the leading man role to play a teen who goes on the run after discovering his biological parents were superspies and the people he thought were his parents are murdered. **See Taylor Lautner interview, page 34**.

FROM LEFT: Morgan Freeman, Austin Highsmith, Cozi Zuehlsdorff and Harry Connick Jr. in *Dolphin Tale*

DOLPHIN TALE

Based on a true story, this film stars **Harry Connick Jr.** as a vet who enlists the help of a doctor (**Morgan Freeman**) to build a prosthetic tail for a dolphin whose own tail was destroyed by a crab trap.

KILLER ELITE

Danny (**Jason Statham**), a retired special ops agent, jumps back into action when his mentor (**Robert De Niro**) is kidnapped by a man (**Clive Owen**) seeking revenge against the pair of them.

MONEYBALL

In 2003, writer **Michael Lewis** wrote a non-fiction book about how Billy Beane, the GM of baseball's financially strapped Oakland Athletics, used overlooked statistics rather than conventional baseball wisdom to assemble a competitive team. It wasn't the kind of book you'd think could be adapted into a Hollywood sports movie, but hire **Steven Zaillian** and **Aaron Sorkin** to write the script, cast **Brad Pitt** to play Beane, surround him with supporting players like **Jonah Hill** and **Philip Seymour Hoffman**, and game on.

Killer Elite's Jason Statham

SEPTEMBER 30

Machine Gun Preacher's Gerard Butler

MACHINE GUN PREACHER

Gerard Butler stars in this bio-pic about Sam Childers, a former drug-dealing biker who found God, went to Sudan in the late 1990s and opened an orphanage that protects women and children left homeless because of Sudan's devastating Civil War.

WHAT'S YOUR NUMBER?

Ally (**Anna Faris**) can't find Mr. Right, so with the help of her single neighbour (**Chris Evans**), she hunts down her past 20 ex-boyfriends to make sure she didn't pass up the man of her dreams. We call that looking for spare change between couch cushions when you've got the winning lottery ticket in your wallet.

Chris Evans and Anna Faris search for Mr. Right in *What's Your Number?*

Daniel Craig and Rachel Weisz get spooked in *Dream House*

DREAM HOUSE

Real-life newlyweds **Daniel Craig** and **Rachel Weisz** play a couple who move into what they think is an idyllic New England home only to learn a woman and her two kids were killed in the house, and the husband — who disappeared — is the suspected killer. Will he return, and how much does their neighbour (**Naomi Watts**) know about what happened in the house? **See Naomi Watts interview, page 38.**

BREAKAWAY

Rajveer (**Vinay Virmani**) just wants to play hockey. But his traditional Sikh father forbids it. So, he puts a Sikh-only team together behind his father's back, and with help from a new coach (**Rob Lowe**) they go farther than expected.

50/50

Adam (**Joseph Gordon-Levitt**) is diagnosed with cancer and depends on his best friend (**Seth Rogen**) and a young psychologist (**Anna Kendrick**) to help him through. This dramedy is based on the real-life experience of screenwriter **Will Reiser**, who was diagnosed with cancer at age 27. **See Seth Rogen interview, page 42.**

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TIFF's ALL-TIME BEST

The **Toronto International Film Festival** will, once again, screen more than 300 films this year. While not all of those movies will go on to achieve cinematic glory, TIFF audiences have enjoyed sneak peeks of many films that did become instant classics. Here's a look at **10 stellar movies that made a splash at TIFF** and then conquered the world

BY INGRID RANDOJA

◀ NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN (2007)
Twenty-three years after debuting *Blood Simple* at TIFF, the Coen Brothers return with this creepy thriller starring Javier Bardem as a cold-blooded killer. Bardem, the Coens and the picture all earn Oscars.

▲ THE KING'S SPEECH (2010)
Colin Firth celebrates his 50th birthday at the TIFF screening of *The King's Speech*. The film wins the festival's People's Choice Award and four Oscars, including Firth's first as Best Actor.

▲ BOYS DON'T CRY (1999)
Unknown Hilary Swank wows Toronto audiences and critics, who predict the 25-year-old will be in the Best Actress Oscar mix for her portrayal of transsexual Brandon Teena. They're right, Swank wins.

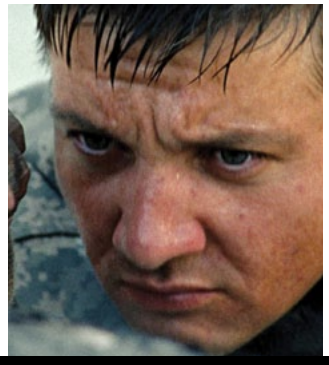
▲ SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE (2008)
This People's Choice Award winner about impoverished lovebirds Jamal and Latika holds the record for the TIFF film with the most Oscar wins with eight, including Best Picture.

L.A. CONFIDENTIAL (1997)
Press shy Kim Basinger brings *L.A. Confidential* to TIFF for its North American premiere. Six months later she wins a Best Supporting Actress Oscar for her turn as a Veronica Lake look-alike prostitute in the neo-noir thriller.

▲ CHARIOTS OF FIRE (1981)
This 1920s-set story of two British track stars is the first People's Choice Award winner to snag a Best Picture Oscar.

BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN (2005)
A thunderous standing ovation after its TIFF gala screening sets the tone for this gay cowboy love story that erases stereotypes and goes on to win three Oscars, including one for Ang Lee as Best Director — although stars Heath Ledger and Jake Gyllenhaal are shut out.

▲ AMERICAN BEAUTY (1999)
TIFF's People's Choice Award winner enthralls audiences. TIFF director Piers Handling tells *The Hollywood Reporter*, "*American Beauty* was the buzz of the festival, the film most talked about." It continues to generate buzz come Oscar time winning five awards.



◀ THE HURT LOCKER (2008)
The Hurt Locker comes to TIFF without distribution, but Summit Entertainment eagerly picks it up. "We saw a movie about a hero, not just a movie about the Iraq war," says Rob Friedman, Summit's CEO. The film wins six Oscars, including Best Picture.

▲ RAY (2004)
TIFF audiences were the first to see Jamie Foxx give his Oscar-winning performance as blind singing legend Ray Charles in *Ray*. (And if you got into the film's after-party you witnessed Foxx and fellow festival attendee Kevin Spacey perform a duet of "Splish Splash.")

THIS YEAR'S TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL RUNS FROM SEPTEMBER 8TH TO 18TH.
GO TO WWW.TIFF.NET FOR THE COMPLETE LINEUP.

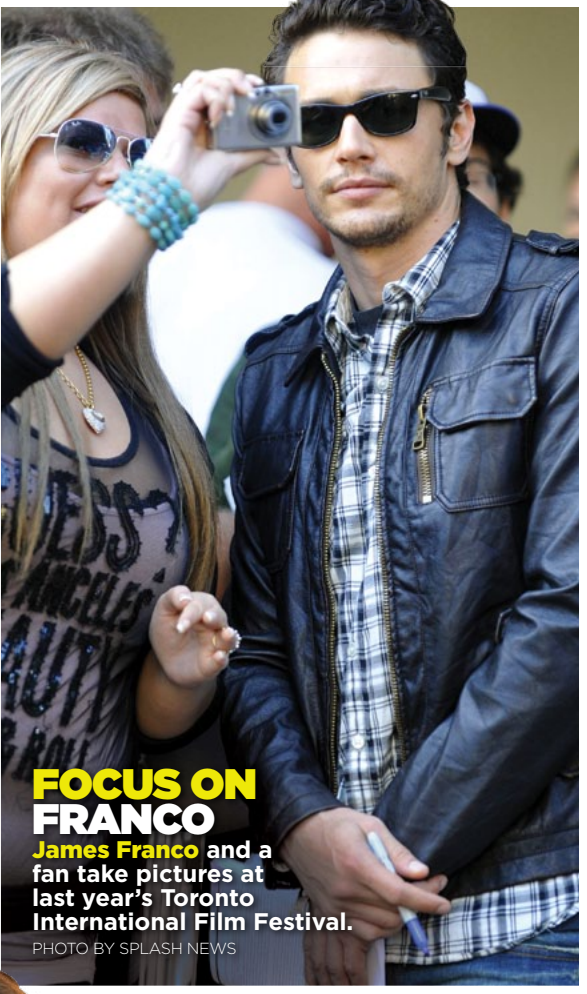
GET YOUR CAMERAS OUT!

Stars focus on the fans at the Toronto International Film Festival

WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

Sam Worthington long-arms a shot at the 2010 TIFF premiere of *Last Night*.

PHOTO BY ARTHUR MOLA/GETTY



FOCUS ON FRANCO

James Franco and a fan take pictures at last year's Toronto International Film Festival.

PHOTO BY SPLASH NEWS

RAVISHING RACHEL

Nine months before marrying Daniel Craig, **Rachel Weisz** takes pics with a fan at the 2010 TIFF premiere of partner Darren Aronofsky's *Black Swan*.

PHOTO BY JEFF VESPA/GETTY

LIVELY SHOT

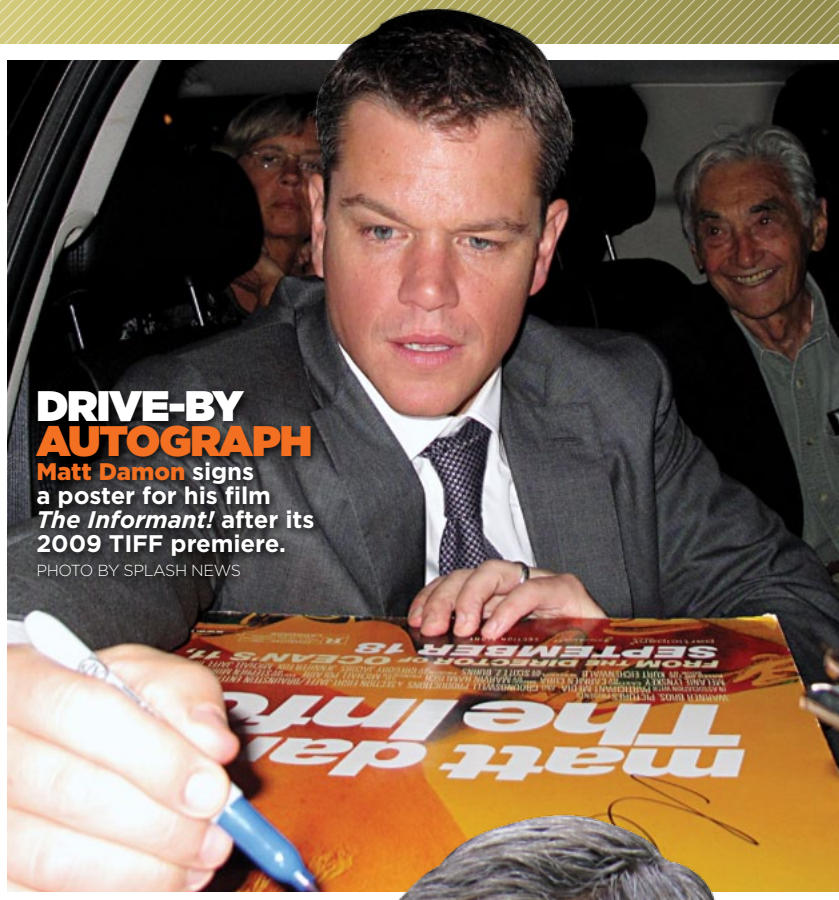
Smile, you're taking a photo with **Blake Lively** at TIFF's 2010 premiere of *The Town*.

PHOTO BY GEORGE PIMENTEL/GETTY

SIGN HERE, PLEASE

The Toronto International Film Festival is heaven for autograph-seekers

ALL EYES ON EMMA
A wide-eyed **Emma Stone** at TIFF's *Easy A* premiere last year.
PHOTO BY MICHAEL TRAN/GETTY



DRIVE-BY AUTOGRAPH
Matt Damon signs a poster for his film *The Informant!* after its 2009 TIFF premiere.
PHOTO BY SPLASH NEWS

NOT EVEN LOOKING
Megan Fox signs a pic of herself at last year's TIFF premiere of *Passion Play*.
PHOTO BY SPLASH NEWS

WORKING INJURED
Even with a bandaged hand, **George Clooney** signs autographs outside the 2009 TIFF press conference for *Up in the Air*.
PHOTO BY SPLASH NEWS

By Marc Saltzman

TECH THIS OUT

2012 Ford Focus, driven to perfection

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: **MyFord Touch™ system; rear-view camera; Active Park Assist**
LEFT: **Focus Titanium 5-door in Red Candy Metallic Tinted Clearcoat**
RIGHT: **The 5-door hatchback in Blue Candy**

You don't have to be Steve Jobs to see how technology has greatly impacted our lives; it has revolutionized how we work, play and communicate. But much of the progress has been limited to the home, office or what you carry in your pocket.

Now it's time for your vehicle to benefit from high-tech tools, to help make driving easier, safer and more fun.

Ford is redefining what's possible with its 2012 Ford Focus. Push the Start button and prepare to be blown away by a carload of technologies that change the game.

For example, MyFord Touch™ is an exclusive technology that allows you to access a wealth of information using either voice commands or your fingertips on an eight-inch screen and two well-placed, five-button controllers on the steering wheel, allowing for ultimate control. Whether you're looking for turn-by-turn directions, fuel consumption info, or to crank the SONY® audio system, MyFord Touch™ offers a new and intuitive way to access everything you need during your daily commute, weekend adventure or road trip.

Or, thanks to Ford SYNC® voice-activated, in-vehicle connectivity system technology, you can initiate a number of actions simply by speaking. Use your voice to play music, podcasts and audiobooks through a number of Bluetooth-enabled smartphones and media players; access climate control hands-free; tell the vehicle you're hungry and it looks up restaurants; or use your mobile device to safely call friends, family and work. In case of emergency, you're also covered: if you have an accident and the air bag deploys, the 911 Assist feature can connect you to a 911 operator through your paired mobile phone.

In fact, the MyFord Touch™ system recognizes up to 10,000 programmed voice-activated commands, up from 100 in the first-generation of Ford SYNC® technology.

And perhaps you've heard of Ford's innovative Active Park Assist, which uses ultrasonic sensors to parallel park the Focus with almost no input from you. It does it nearly three times faster than competitive park assist systems and is exclusive in its class. Speaking of assists, you can also opt for a rear-view camera monitor and parking sensors.

Other conveniences include an Intelligent Access system — if you have the key fob in your pocket or purse, doors will automatically unlock as you approach the vehicle — and rain-sensing wipers, which turn on when they detect moisture, then use an optical sensor to judge the intensity of rain and/or snowfall and adjust wiper speed accordingly.

The 2012 Ford Focus also excels in fuel economy, thanks to its Active Grille Shutters. When the front grille vents close the vehicle becomes more aerodynamic, saving fuel, and allowing the engine to operate at the ideal temperature.

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Vehicle may be shown with optional equipment/features. Model shown is the 2012 Focus TITANIUM Hatchback for $25,099 (MSRP). ‡When equipped with navigation feature. *Some mobile phones and some digital media players may not be fully compatible—check www.syncmyride.com for a listing of mobile phones, media players, and features supported. Driving while distracted can result in loss of vehicle control, accident and injury. Ford recommends that drivers use caution when using mobile phones, even with voice commands. Only use mobile phones and other devices, even with voice commands, not essential to driving when it is safe to do so. SYNC® is optional on most new Ford vehicles. Some MyFord Touch functions are not available while driving. †Class is Small Sedans and Hatchbacks. ±2012 Focus S Sedan starting from $15,999 MSRP (Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price). Optional features, freight, air tax, license, fuel fill charge, insurance, PPSA, dealer PDI, administration fees, any environmental charges or fees, and all applicable taxes extra. Dealer may sell or lease for less. ~Estimated fuel consumption ratings for the 2012 Focus SE Sedan Duratec 2.0L I4 engine [6-speed automatic transmission with available SFE Package] / [6-speed automatic transmission]: [7.2L/100 km city and 4.8L/100 km hwy] / [7.3L/100 km city and 5.2L/100 km hwy]. Fuel consumption ratings based on Transport Canada-approved test methods. Actual fuel consumption may vary based on road conditions, vehicle loading and driving habits. ©2011 Ford Motor Company of Canada, Limited. All rights reserved.

TIMELINE:

SEPTEMBER 11TH A D

From frantic last-minute changes, to tentative references, to direct retellings, to background plot points. On the **10th anniversary of the September 11th attacks** we track the evolution of cinema's take on the day that changed everything ■ BY MARNI WEISZ

SEPTEMBER 12 2001

COLLATERAL DAMAGE

The day after the September 11th attacks, Warner Bros. delays the release of this thriller starring Arnold Schwarzenegger as a man whose wife and son are killed in a terrorist bombing. The film, which was supposed to hit theatres October 5th, 2001, eventually comes out February 8th, 2002.

SEPTEMBER 13 2001

SPIDER-MAN

Two days after the attacks, Sony recalls this poster in which the World Trade Center's twin towers are seen reflected in Spider-Man's eyes, and pulls a trailer in which Spidey catches bank robbers in a giant web he spins between the twin towers. Sony insists the sequence was shot specifically for the trailer and was never intended to be in the film.

SEPTEMBER 5 2002

ELEVEN MINUTES, NINE SECONDS, ONE IMAGE: SEPTEMBER 11

This indie release that incorporates short films from 11 different directors — each one 11 minutes, nine seconds and one frame long — premieres at the Venice Film Festival. Directors including Ken Loach, Sean Penn and Mira Nair try to make sense of 9/11 with fictional stories that range from obliquely to directly related to the attacks.

DECEMBER 16 2002

25TH HOUR

The Spike Lee drama starring Edward Norton as Monty, a New York drug dealer preparing for a seven-year prison term, opens in New York City and is one of the first movies to refer to the tragedy. Although not a part of the main plot, the story takes place in post-9/11 New York and the attacks loom in the background. Monty's friend Frank (Barry Pepper) lives in a beautiful apartment that overlooks Ground Zero, but won't move because the price is right. Meanwhile, Monty's dad (Brian Cox) owns a bar frequented by fire fighters who survived that day.

JUNE 25 2004

FAHRENHEIT 9/11

One year after Michael Moore is booed for criticizing George Bush and the Iraq War during his acceptance speech for Best Documentary Feature (*Bowling for Columbine*) at the Academy Awards, he releases this doc about the political lead-up to, and aftermath of, 9/11. The well-received film etches many images into the collective psyche, but one of the most striking is that of a bewildered George Bush receiving news of the attacks while visiting a grade two class in Sarasota, Florida.

ECADE IN MOVIES

APRIL 28 2006

UNITED 93

The first — and arguably best — film depicting the events of September 11th comes from British director Paul Greengrass and concentrates not on the New York attacks, but the hijacking of United Flight 93, the Boeing 757-222 that went down in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, after terrorists forced their way into the cockpit. The film interweaves the passengers' attempts to regain control of the plane, their frantic calls home to loved ones, and air traffic control's reaction to the previously unthinkable.

AUGUST 9 2006

WORLD TRADE CENTER

Director Oliver Stone's stab at capturing a slice of 9/11 hits theatres. His uncharacteristically apolitical drama tells the true story of New York Port Authority police officers John McLoughlin (Nicolas Cage) and Will Jimeno (Michael Peña), who were trapped in the rubble for 10 harrowing hours after the twin towers came down.

MARCH 23 2007

REIGN OVER ME

The first mainstream feature to deal directly with the long-lasting emotional aftermath of 9/11 hits theatres. Adam Sandler plays a fictional New York dentist who loses his wife and three daughters in the attacks, and then develops a form of amnesia, blocking out all memories of them, and becoming a recluse.

DECEMBER 16 2009

AVATAR

Director James Cameron mimics the iconic image of the crumbling World Trade Center towers in *Avatar*'s climactic fall of the Tree of Souls. As the tree tumbles down, Na'vi run for their lives, some jumping from its branches, while a shower of ash and embers fall around them. Although most critics refer to the obvious allusion, Cameron says only that he was "surprised at how much it did look like September 11," adding, "I didn't think that was necessarily a bad thing."

MARCH 1 2010

REMEMBER ME

The events of September 11th are a mere plot point in this romantic melodrama. Two tortured souls with family issues, Tyler (Robert Pattinson) and Ally (Emilie de Raven), fall in love in New York circa 2001. In one of the film's final scenes (SPOILER ALERT) Tyler sits, waiting, in his father's office in the World Trade Center as the planes hit.

CONTAGION
HITS THEATRES
SEPTEMBER 9TH

DYING TO FIND GOOD WORK

Matt Damon's struggle to find quality roles leads him once again to director Steven Soderbergh, this time for ***Contagion***, a thriller about a plague that sweeps the globe, killing off lead characters left, right and centre ■ BY BOB STRAUSS

***Contagion*, an all-star thriller about** the race to halt a deadly virus, marks Matt Damon's sixth collaboration with prolific filmmaker Steven Soderbergh — *Che: Part Two*, the three *Ocean's* capers and *The Informant!* were the others.

Repeat performances with distinctive directors has been a hallmark of the actor's career. They've ranged across the director spectrum from scruffy Kevin Smith (*Chasing Amy*, *Jersey Girl*, *Dogma*) to classicist Clint Eastwood (*Invictus*, *Hereafter*) to indie specialist Gus Van Sant (*Gerry*, *Finding Forrester* and *Good Will Hunting*, for which Damon won a screenwriting Oscar) and politically charged Paul Greengrass (*The Bourne Supremacy* and *Ultimatum*, *Green Zone*).

The relationship with the brainy, unpredictable Soderbergh, however, seems like a pretty special one. Damon explains how the director piqued his interest in the *Contagion* project, with its echoes of SARS and avian flu (but so much worse).

"Scott Burns, who did *The Informant!*, wrote it and when Steven sent me the script, he said, 'Read this and then go wash your hands,'" Damon recalls over the phone from New York City. "It was really good. It's like a horror movie for adults...more of a mix between a horror movie and kind of a murder mystery. You've got all these different storylines, very similar in that way to what he did with *Traffic*. You've got these scientists trying to reverse engineer this virus to find the index patient, and meanwhile the virus is running wild all over the world and there's all the horror that comes from an actual outbreak."

Damon didn't mind that his role is one of about half-a-dozen star turns in the film, nor the fact that he's not playing a heroic scientist.

"I kind of represent the more human side of it," he explains. "I'm an unemployed guy. The idea is that I worked for a bank that wasn't too big to fail, and I'm married to a very high-powered alpha female that Gwyneth Paltrow plays. She comes back from a business trip in Hong Kong at the beginning of the movie and bites the dust in relatively short order. Everyone worked on the movie for about two weeks because we're dropping like flies! Laurence Fishburne is kind of the main scientist, Jude Law and Kate Winslet are in it; it's a really wonderful cast."

Damon isn't the only actor who'll do almost anything Soderbergh asks. And he'll answer the call again next year for CONTINUED ▶

PHOTO BY GARY GERSHOFF/GETTY

Matt Damon in *Contagion*

"Everyone worked on the movie for about two weeks **because we're dropping like flies"**

Liberace, the director's bio-pic of the famously flamboyant entertainer. That is, providing Michael Douglas, who appeared in Soderbergh's *Traffic* and is tapped to play Liberace, is healthy enough after his cancer battle. Damon will play Liberace's lover.

"We've got the money to start in June of 2012, and that's mainly due to scheduling reasons because I'm doing [*District 9* creator] Neill Blomkamp's *Elysium* in Vancouver this summer," Damon says. That sci-fi is actually shooting in B.C. through the end of this month.

"We counted, [while working] on *Contagion*, whether George Clooney or I had done more Soderbergh movies. We're tied right now at six. George has *Man from U.N.C.L.E.* that he's going to do at some point with Steven and I have *Liberace*, so we'll still be neck-and-neck at seven by next year."

But the Soderbergh branch of so many A-listers' careers may end sooner than they hope. The filmmaker has said several times that, after he's completed this last batch of movies, he will retire from directing — or at least directing studio pictures. When teased about what he did to drive Soderbergh away, Damon jokingly recoils.

"I'm not responsible for that at all!" he says with mock defensiveness. "He's going to retire for personal reasons. He says that he feels like he's done what he's wanted to do with film and wants to try something else. It's devastating to all of us, we want him to keep going. But we want him to be happy."

Plans for Soderbergh's retirement party may have to be put on hold, though. At this year's Comic-Con International, the director backtracked, blaming a drunken conversation with Damon during the *Contagion* shoot for the stories.

As for Damon's future, aside from the projects already mentioned, he has the lead role in Cameron Crowe's upcoming family dramedy *We Bought a Zoo* and voices a crustacean (as does *Ocean's* co-star Brad Pitt) in George Miller's animated *Happy Feet 2*.

"I'm still working, man," Damon says. "I'm still hustling, and I must be doing something right."

That said, Damon acknowledges it isn't easy, these days, for a guy with serious movie ambitions to maintain the degree of quality to which he's accustomed. The recession and other market factors have caused financing for independent productions — a large portion of Damon's c.v. — to dry up. And his big *Bourne* action franchise, generally considered the genre's most artful series of the last dozen or so years, is moving ahead without him or Greengrass on board for the fourth installment, *The Bourne Legacy*.

Ever cheery, Damon doesn't sound concerned.

"Yeah, we want to make another one," he admits. "They're doing one without me right now, which is an attempt, I think, to just expand the *Bourne* world, create the whole world around him. But it doesn't preclude me and Paul from doing another one, and we'd love to do one someday. We'll see what happens."

Not that we can conceive of Matt Damon hurting for work at this point, but he does have a new mouth to feed. He and wife Luciana Barroso's third daughter together (they have a fourth girl from Barroso's first marriage) was born two days after Damon's own birthday last year.

Whatever changes occur in his life, Damon says he's already a much different guy than the eager, uncertain kid who picked up the Oscar for *Good Will Hunting*.

"I turned 40 last October and I feel great," he says, persuasively. "I feel so much calmer than I did when I was 30, just because all of the big questions are kind of answered. I'm just kind of getting a kick out of living now."

Bob Strauss lives in L.A. where he writes about movies and filmmakers.

JUDE LAW PHOTO BY SPLASH NEWS

HAZMAT**CHAMP**

Some movies, like *Outbreak* (left), go conventional. Others, like *The Crazies* (centre), go intimidating. But of all the Hazmat suits we've seen in movies, Jude Law's cobbled-together contraption from *Contagion* is our favourite.

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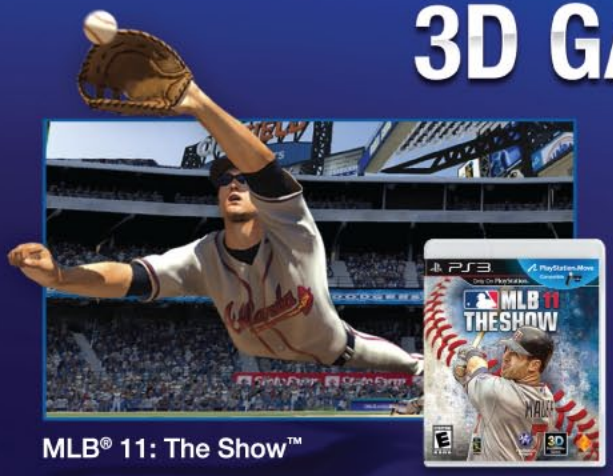

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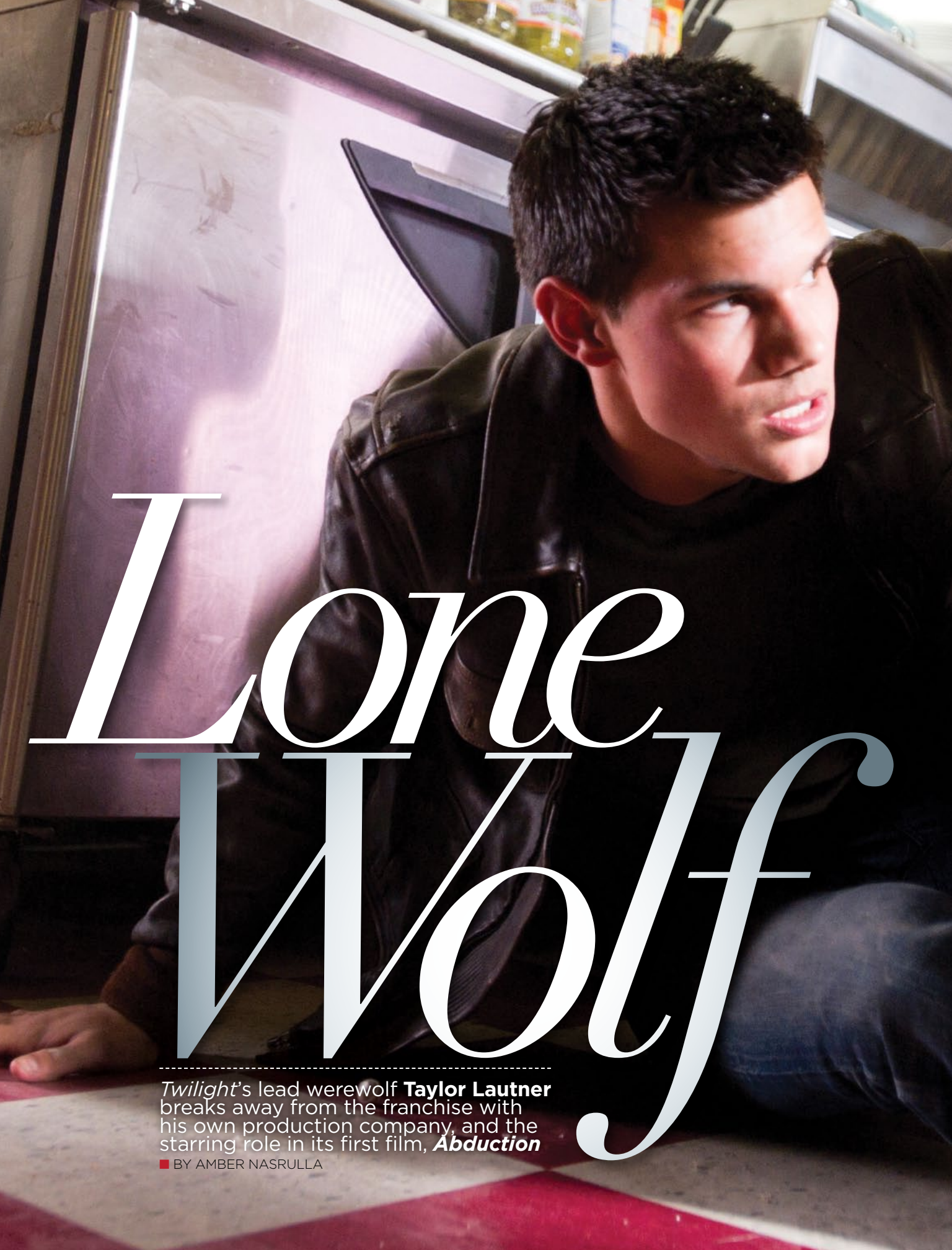

Lone Wolf

Twilight's lead werewolf **Taylor Lautner** breaks away from the franchise with his own production company, and the starring role in its first film, ***Abduction***

BY AMBER NASRULLA

Where does he go from here?

At just 19 years old, Taylor Lautner seems to have it all. He will reportedly earn an eight-figure paycheque for his role in the futuristic prison movie *Incarceron*, due out in 2013. This fall he stars in *Breaking Dawn – Part 1*, the first half of the *Twilight* franchise's dramatic conclusion. *People* magazine ranked him fourth on its "50 Most Amazing Bodies" list (the buff one was once a junior martial arts champ). And he has projects with Michael Bay and Gus Van Sant in the works.

Lautner has also launched his own production company — Tailor Made — and its first release, *Abduction*, comes out this month. He plays the lead, a high school student named Nathan who discovers a photo of himself on a missing-persons website. Realizing that his parents aren't really his parents, Nathan goes on the run to discover his true identity, all the while being chased by bad guys. Or are they good guys? And, somehow, he finds time to romance the girl next door, played by Lily Collins, daughter of Genesis frontman Phil Collins.

Born in Michigan, Lautner grew up in Valencia, California, and now lives in L.A. It's on a summer day in Beverly Hills that we meet to talk about *Abduction*, *Twilight* and the importance of discipline.

Q:

The new movie seems like *The Bourne Identity* meets *Enemy of the State* mashed with *The Fugitive*.

"It's definitely got a lot of similarity to *Bourne*, which I'm a huge fan of. Nathan's journey is, well, you can almost imagine what Jason Bourne was going through 10 years ago when he... [trails off]. You'll just have to find out!"

It's a very physical role. Did you have to jump off a train on the first day?

"Not the first but the second day [laughs]. I had a lot of physical training that I hadn't done before. I started boxing two or three months before we started filming because that takes a while to pick up, you really can't fake that. And we showed up to Pittsburgh a couple of weeks early to start wrestling training and motorcycle training. In this one I'm actually on a real street bike, a racing bike, which was a little intimidating at first. Nathan drives a motorcycle. He's a cool kid. And no, he doesn't wear a helmet. Nathan is a thrill-seeker."

CONTINUED ▶

Taylor Lautner and Lily Collins are on the run in *Abduction*

ABDUCTION
HITS THEATRES
SEPTEMBER 23RD

"I'd be lying if I said there was no pressure at all," says Lautner. **"It's mainly just wanting to please fans"**

This is the first film from your production company and the first film in which you're the leading man. How much pressure are you feeling?
"I'd be lying if I said there was no pressure at all. It's mainly just wanting to please fans. At the same time you've got to put that aside and try not to think about it because you'll go crazy."

Director John Singleton said he was excited to work with you because he wanted to see what he could do with you as an actor. What did you learn from him?
"The greatest thing that John gave me? He's a film guru. He's seen every single film that's ever been made. Before we started filming we sat down and studied actors and watched a ton of movies together that are similar to *Abduction*. We watched *Minority Report*, *The Fugitive* with Harrison Ford. Basically leading men on the run searching for the truth."

Do you hope to follow in those actors' footsteps after *Twilight* is over?
"I love action movies, but the great thing about those actors is that's not all they did. Tom Cruise definitely loves his action movies but he's also challenged himself to do many different roles. He did *Born on the Fourth of July*; he shows his comedic chops in *Jerry Maguire*, *Risky Business*. It would be a dream of mine to be able to challenge myself to do such a wide variety of roles."

In *Breaking Dawn*, Jacob falls in love with Bella and Edward's newborn daughter, Renesmee. That's a creepy storyline to play out.
"He doesn't fall in love. He's a werewolf and the legend is that they *imprint* on somebody, and he does *imprint* on her."

So you're saying not to judge the species?
"Yeah, definitely not [laughs]."

As a highly paid teen actor, what have you splurged on?
"I recently got the iPad 2. I know it's not that exciting. My parents have always raised me to be a good saver. The other thing is I'm never home. I'm rarely here. I'm always busy filming."

You're too busy to shop?
"It's true [laughs]. There's no point in buying something huge and extravagant if you're never going to be home to enjoy it."

You seem very centred. Where does the discipline come from?
"Martial arts had a major part to do with the discipline. One of the most important things martial arts taught me was just hard work. You don't wake up one morning and everything has happened for you; you've got to go out and get it and work for it and that's definitely the case with martial arts and any sports I've played and the case with this business."

When fans shadow you, how do you distance yourself from the attention?
"Sometimes it's hard. When I'm on set and there's 600 fans showing up, that's amazing. It's amazing to see that kind of support. They're the reason I'm on that set right then, filming the movie, so it's really important for me to show them how thankful I am. But sometimes you do just want to have a moment to relax and sit down on the couch and spend time with your friends."

What do you miss the most about a normal life?
"Theme parks. I love roller coasters, Magic Mountain. I've been to Disneyworld, like, seven times. It's actually really funny because I live in Los Angeles and I've never been to Disneyland, but it would be pretty difficult to go now."

When was the last time you went to a theme park?
"Five years ago."

Freelance writer Amber Nasrulla works in Toronto and L.A.

AB-DORABLE

Taylor Lautner was proud of his abs long before his *Twilight* character, werewolf Jacob Black, discovered life's better without shirts. Here he is showing off his little six-pack at the L.A. premiere of *Sahara* in 2005. He was just 13. Funny thing is, we can't figure out why he was there; he wasn't even in the film. Just a fly-by ab show, we guess.

PHOTO BY GETTY

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DREAM HOUSE
HITS THEATRES
SEPTEMBER 30TH

Good Neighbour?

Naomi Watts moves around so much, one of these days you may find her living next to you. In this month's horror flick ***Dream House*** she plays neighbour to block newbies Daniel Craig and Rachel Weisz...and she knows some pretty scary stuff about their house ■ BY ASHLEY JUDE COLLIE

New York, New York.

In a city of more than eight million, it's relatively easy for an Academy Award-nominated actor, even one as striking as Naomi Watts, to live and blend in.

The 42-year-old has worked continuously since her 2001 breakthrough performance in David Lynch's *Mulholland Dr.*, but she has found new balance in her life. When she's not filming or promoting her latest project — like *Dream House*, the Jim Sheridan-directed thriller that opens this month — she and her partner, fellow actor Liev Schreiber, often take a mostly anonymous bite out of The Big Apple.

"On an ordinary weekend, we'll pack a picnic, go to Central Park on great bikes that we take our two boys on. Stretch out a blanket and let them run free a little," she says. "They're just getting to the age where we can explore the city and do more adventurous things like checking out the Museum of Natural History. And I can still walk around a little unrecognized."

Sort of hiding in plain sight.

But her real-life family scenario is a complete antithesis to the situation in *Dream House*. Sheridan (*My Left Foot*) has called the film a "genre horror story" and "a psychological thriller," and it certainly has echoes of *The Amityville Horror.*

English actors Daniel Craig and Rachel Weisz star as a couple who move into their fantasy abode only to discover three of the four previous residents, a woman and her two children, were murdered there. The father was the only survivor. Watts plays their neighbour who shares info about the grisly event.

"I'm interested in characters who may live fairly ordinary lives but then are put in challenging circumstances, like the characters in *Dream House*," says Watts. "After moving into a seemingly perfect new home, a family slowly finds out about a brutal crime that was committed against the former residents. I play one of their neighbours and we're trying to work out what's going wrong...there's something very mysterious going on that affects these characters."

The scariest part for Watts may have been trying to blend into a cast that includes new real-life couple Craig and Weisz, who married earlier this year. But it's often been about blending in for the much-travelled Watts. Born in Kent, England, to a Welsh mother, Myfanwy, and an English father, Peter, who worked with Pink Floyd, Watts was a tomboy CONTINUED ▶

Naomi Watts and Daniel Craig in *Dream House*

▶ who so wanted to fit in with her older brother Ben's group that she "climbed trees and played with toy soldiers." Naomi was just seven when her father passed away, and soon after Myfanwy moved her children to Anglesey, where the young Naomi had to quickly learn how to speak Welsh.

"My mum is still an adventurer, a gypsy, which definitely rubbed off on me," says Watts. "She likes inspirational things and travel. But there are consequences to moving around — you fear maybe being abandoned. The pros, however, are that you can adapt to any situation and that you're open to new experiences and surroundings. From early on, I learned about fitting in, and would do everything I could to please someone. And that led me into this arena of acting. Learning to study others, study characters and understand them."

It was her mother's aforementioned wanderlust that inspired the Watts family to move to Australia in 1982, where Naomi began her acting career. That in turn led her to the U.S. and Hollywood in the mid-'90s. Now having lived in four countries, feeling at home in New York is a wonderful new thing for Watts. "I've been kind of nomadic all my life but I am really enjoying nesting with Liev and the boys, buying furniture and being settled," she says. In short, creating her own dream home.

With more than 40 movies to her credit, Watts has applied her chameleon-like talent to everything from blockbusters (*King Kong*), to comedies (*Le Divorce*) and dramas (*21 Grams*, for which she earned that Oscar nomination), and especially thrillers of all kinds, including: neo-noir (*Mulholland Dr.*), psychological (*Funny Games*), political espionage (*Fair Game*), and horror (*The Ring*).

So why her fascination with thrillers — many of which put her in harrowing circumstances?

"I like the fear of the unknown. Fear is a great emotion and a lot of scenarios come under its umbrella. As an actor, it allows you more to do. Thrillers are actually 'fun' to act in. As for the characters, I am fascinated by strong women. They're usually going through something where they're not always strong or the situation makes them vulnerable, there's something they have to overcome that makes them become strong."

In conversation, Watts' accent easily shifts and she admits, "My accent goes all over the place and then people end up asking you if you're from South Africa." But she adds an astute observation: "Wherever we moved, I would quickly pick up the regional accent to fit in. It's been said that as an actor you don't want too strong an identity because you have to lose that in order to take on the identity of the character you're playing."

It's this act of immersing herself in a character's arc that so intrigues Watts.

"I like my job because we get to show all sides of a character. As humans, no one person is only one thing. A hero is not always a hero, he or she has their tragic flaws. The thing about taking on different characters, you get to explore their various facets, and they reflect some aspects of your experience, things you've thought about or seen in others. And you get to live in the shoes of those other people."

Watts, who would love to "do a movie that would impress" her kids, says being a mother now impacts her work: "You see things through the eyes of somebody else now as a parent, and maybe as an actor, that helps you get closer to a character. You're more attuned. But once the day is over, I'm happily racing back to my kids and not bringing my work home. I used to stay up in the wee hours, going over the script, thinking about the character, what I was going to do the next day on the set. Now, you're not just thinking of yourself anymore."

Ashley Jude Collie is a Canadian writer living in Los Angeles.

DID YA KNOW?

Naomi Watts and Nicole Kidman (seen here at the 2007 Academy Awards) have been best buds since they met at a casting call for a bikini commercial when they were just teens in Australia. Watts also dated Kidman's sister's boyfriend for a while. *—MW*

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Laughing Matters

When a friend was diagnosed with cancer, **Seth Rogen** encouraged him to write a screenplay about the experience as a way to squeeze something positive from the situation. Seven years later, Rogen plays a version of himself in that bittersweet comedy, ***50/50***

BY MARNI WEISZ

When Seth Rogen speaks, his sentence-to-laugh ratio is about 2:1. It doesn't seem to matter what the 29-year-old Vancouver native is talking about — his trailer, his hometown, cancer. Every other sentence, there's that rumbling laugh. Often, it doesn't even interrupt the sentence; it just rolls happily behind the words.

When talking about his Vancouver abode Rogen says, "I've had that particular apartment a little over a year but I would stay with my parents before that [laughs]. Or my sister. I would actually normally stay with my sister but she just had a baby so I can't do that anymore [laughs]."

These days, unless he's shooting in Vancouver, Rogen rarely gets to spend more than a week there at a time. As we speak on the phone, he's sitting in his messy trailer on the L.A. set of *My Mother's Curse*, a comedy in which Barbra Streisand plays his mom. "It's great, she's hilarious. She's a lot of fun," says Rogen…with a laugh.

He did get to shoot in Vancouver last year. The movie — *50/50*, a gentle comedy about cancer — premieres at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) this month before opening nationwide on September 30th. Joseph Gordon-Levitt plays Adam, a mild-mannered radio writer who discovers he has a schwannoma neurofibrosarcoma, a potentially fatal form of cancer. Rogen is Kyle, the potty-mouthed (shocker) best friend, who helps Adam deal with the disease in a variety of inappropriate ways, like taking him to a bar so he can use his bald, post-chemo head to pick up women. Ideally, one for each of them.

Comparisons to another Seth Rogen movie — 2009's *Funny People*, in which Rogen played the assistant/friend to Adam Sandler's character, a famous comedian battling acute myeloid leukemia — are inevitable.

"I was working on [*50/50*] before the idea of *Funny People* was even thought of," says Rogen. "They kind of happened congruently after that and we just kind of knew that they were different enough that it didn't really bother me."

In fact, Rogen and his creative partner Evan Goldberg (they wrote *Superbad* together based on their chidhood friendship) CONTINUED ▶

Joseph Gordon-Levitt (left) and Seth Rogen bond in *50/50*

50/50 HITS THEATRES SEPTEMBER 30TH

Rogen watches Gordon-Levitt shave his head in *50/50*

have been working on *50/50* since 2004. That's when their friend Will Reiser, whom they met while all three were writing for *Da Ali G Show*, was diagnosed with cancer.

"We ferociously tried to look for the upside in things to the point that I'm sure it was insensitive at times, but it was the only way that I knew how to deal with something like that," Rogen explains.

In trying to "squeeze something positive" from the situation they encouraged Reiser to write a screenplay based on his cancer experience. And after he did, they became the film's producers, shepherding the project through all of its stages.

"We found the studio by ourselves, we found the director [Jonathan Levine], we found the cast, we hired everyone, we got involved in the budget and the schedule and the post-production process, hiring the editors and the composers. We just tried to oversee the whole process while trying to be as collaborative as possible. We hired mostly our friends for all of it [laughs], so that kind of helped out."

So how much of Rogen is there in the crass, but ultimately caring and loyal, Kyle?

"I would say it's a slightly embellished and cinematic version [laughs] of the role I filled in his life at that time," says Rogen. "I definitely was not as insensitive in real life as my character is towards his plight, and I wasn't as outwardly self-serving [laughs] as my character is in the movie."

That said, Rogen admits the aforementioned bar scene didn't materialize out of thin air. "I did meet my girlfriend, whom I'm marrying, when [Reiser] was sick at a bar, and I'm sure we talked about the fact that he was sick. And [laughs], I would never say that I exploited it to the degree that my character does in the movie, but I can't ignore the fact that…it probably played out in a slightly similar way as it does in the movie [laughs]."

Rogen proposed to that girlfriend, Lauren Miller, in September 2010, just after he finished shooting another movie in Canada, *Take This Waltz*.

Directed by Sarah Polley and shot in Toronto, *Take This Waltz* — which also premieres at this month's TIFF — stars Rogen and Michelle Williams as a married couple whose relationship crumbles after she meets an intriguing artist (Luke Kirby) during a business trip to Nova Scotia. The movie explores the idea that the beginnings of relationships are addictive, and questions whether long-term relationships are sustainable.

Not exactly material to inspire a marriage proposal. But Rogen had decided to propose to Miller before arriving on set, and carried through once he arrived back in L.A. "It was interesting, though, because there were times when we were shooting an intense scene with a big argument and then I'd go to my trailer and talk to the ring guy about getting the engagement ring," Rogen says…with a laugh. "The humour in that was not lost on me."

Rogen won't give any details about where or when the wedding will take place. He says he's leaving all of that up to the bride. But we're pretty sure it won't happen this month, since the actor will spend at least part of September in Toronto for the festival. "I will be there," he says with certainty.

It's not the first time he's had a movie at TIFF. *Zack and Miri Make a Porno* debuted in Toronto in 2008 but Rogen was shooting *Funny People* and couldn't make it. He insists nothing will stop him from attending this year, saying word among L.A. film types is that Toronto is a trip worth taking.

"It seems to be perceived as one of the few remaining legitimate film festivals," he says, before adding with a laugh, "Although, I have to admit I'm not really part of the 'film lover's community' here. I'm the guy who gets excited about seeing the new *Transformers* movie."

Marni Weisz is the editor of Cineplex Magazine.

BROMANCE STANCE

At the core of *50/50* there is a loving friendship between two men — Adam (Joseph Gordon-Levitt), who has just been diagnosed with cancer, and Kyle (Seth Rogen), a buddy who helps him through the hard times. But don't call the movie a bromance.

"I hate it," Rogen says of the ubiquitous new movie word. "The first time I heard the term was when we were promoting *Pineapple Express*. The first time I ever heard the term dramedy was when we were working on *Freaks and Geeks*. I hate those terms, I think they're so weird. When we were making *Suberbad* the term bromance hadn't been invented yet and I think that really helped. It reduces the impact. More than anything it's just dumb. If *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* had been called a bromance I don't know if it would have had the impact it did and been thought of as such a great movie." *—MW*

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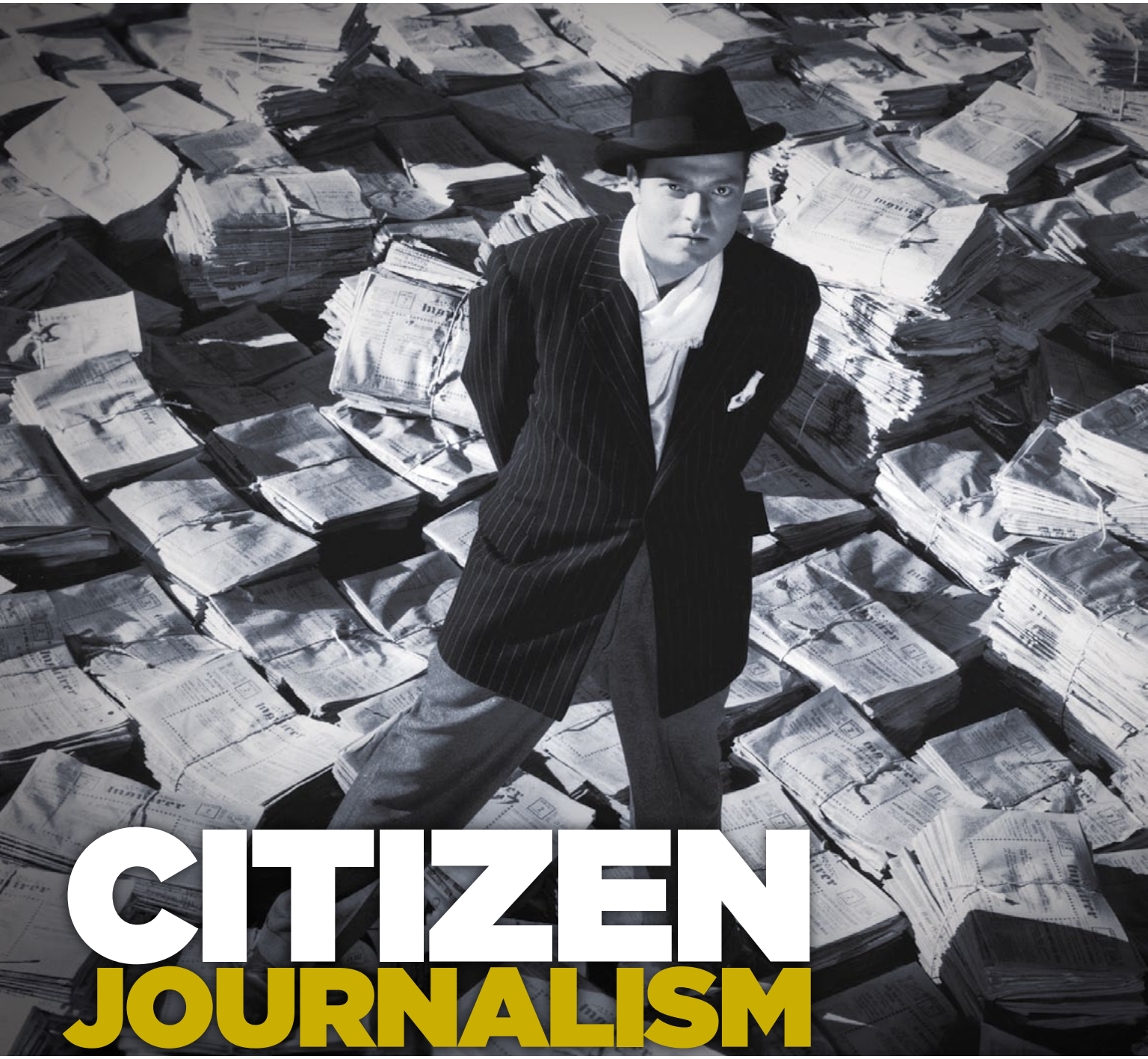

CITIZEN JOURNALISM

We all tell little lies — "Yes, I like your outfit," or "Why, of course I've seen *Citizen Kane*, considered by many to be the greatest movie ever made."

There's no shame in never having seen *Citizen Kane*, the shame would be in not seeing it when it returns to theatres 70 years after its 1941 debut.

Starring, co-written and directed by the then 25-year-old *wunderkind* Orson Welles, *Citizen Kane* recounts the rise and fall of newspaper mogul/politician Charles Foster Kane, and is a thinly veiled portrait of real-life mogul William Randolph Hearst.

Welles' film forever changed the cinematic playing field — he used faster film and wide-angle lenses that gave the movie a dramatic deep focus — and in doing so gave a generation of filmmakers a new set of tools with which to tell their stories.

—INGRID RANDOJA

Citizen Kane **screens as part of Cineplex's Classic Film Series on September 7th and 25th. Go to Cineplex.com/events for times and locations.**

CASTING CALL

BY INGRID RANDOJA

WATSON'S A BEAUTY

Emma Watson will team with horror/suspense master **Guillermo del Toro** for a remake of *Beauty and the Beast*. Del Toro will only produce the pic (not direct), which will probably get underway when he finishes working on his alien/monster movie *Pacific Rim*. Watson, meanwhile, has *My Week with Marilyn* and *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* set to open in the coming year.

FRESH FACE

NATALIE GAL

She could be **Angelina Jolie**'s younger sister, and you can bet the 26-year-old, Russian-born **Natalie Gal** (who speaks four languages and studied acting at the Moscow Art Theatre) is hoping for a Jolie-like career. The model/actor can be seen in this month's *Contagion* playing a Russian spy, and appears in two other films this year — the upcoming **Adam Sandler** comedy *Jack and Jill,* and **Madonna**'s directing effort *W.E.*

SANDLER'S DRACULA

He lacks **Robert Pattinson**'s soulful looks, but that's okay because the vampire **Adam Sandler** plays in the upcoming *Hotel Transylvania* is animated. Sandler voices Count Dracula in the 3D pic in which Drac and his teenage daughter run a hotel for monsters and their families. Listen for **Kevin James** as Frankenstein, **Fran Drescher** as Frankenstein's Bride, **David Spade** as Quasimodo, **Cee Lo Green** as a mummy and **Andy Samberg** as the human who stumbles across the hotel and makes a play for Drac's daughter. *Hotel Transylvania* hits theatres September 21, 2012.

McAVOY IN *TRANCE*

James McAvoy will star in director Danny Boyle's *Trance*, about a robber (McAvoy) who enlists the help of an art auctioneer to steal a painting. But when the auctioneer suffers a blow to his head and can't remember where he stashed the stolen goods, McAvoy brings in a hypnotist to unlock his memory. *Trance* is set to open in 2013.

ALSO IN THE WORKS

▶Look for the *Thor* sequel to unspool July 26, 2013. ▶Spike Lee will direct the Hollywood remake of the critically acclaimed Korean action pic *Oldboy*. ▶*Rush* puts Chris Hemsworth behind the wheel for the story of Formula One race car driver James Hunt. ▶Sean Bean will play Snow White's (Lily Collins) father and king of the realm in director Tarsem Singh's *The Brothers Grimm: Snow White*.

NATALIE GAL PHOTO BY HENRY MCGEE/KEYSTONE PRESS

AT HOME

September's BEST DVD AND BLU-RAY

BRIDESMAIDS SEPTEMBER 20

While we're still not nuts about the message that a single women is inevitably unhappy until she pairs up with some guy, we do give this **Kristen Wiig** comedy a lot of cred for being crass, unpredictable and just plain funny. **Maya Rudolph** plays the bride-to-be who chooses her best friend Annie (Wiig) to be her maid of honour, damning her to a litany of humiliating tasks.

X-MEN: FIRST CLASS

SEPTEMBER 9

The relationship between mutant frenemies Magneto and Professor X is the most interesting thing about the X-Men franchise, and this critically acclaimed prequel brings us back to its roots with **Michael Fassbender** and **James McAvoy** playing young versions of the power pair.

INCENDIES

SEPTEMBER 13

Director **Denis Villeneuve**'s tale of two siblings who return to their Middle East homeland to research their late mother's (**Lubna Azabal**) war-torn life was deemed the best Canadian film of the year at the Genies, winning eight awards in total. It also earned a Best Foreign-Language Film nomination at the Oscars.

THOR

SEPTEMBER 13

Thor (**Chris Hemsworth**), son of Odin (**Anthony Hopkins**), Norse god of thunder, wielder of hammer, wearer of armour, owner of good hair, descends to Earth where he meets a hot astrophysicist (**Natalie Portman**) and tries to save humankind from his obnoxious brother Loki (**Tom Hiddleston**).

MORE MOVIES ▶ **HANNA** (SEPTEMBER 6) ▶ **EVERYTHING MUST GO** (SEPTEMBER 6) ▶ **THE TEMPEST** (SEPTEMBER 13) ▶ **HESHER** (SEPTEMBER 13) ▶ **SCREAM 4** (SEPTEMBER 20) ▶ **CONAN O'BRIEN CAN'T STOP** (SEPTEMBER 27)

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Games

Why We Love...

GEARS OF WAR 3

SEPTEMBER 20

(XBOX 360)

It's pretty awesome that the third installment of the biggest dude game in history was written by a woman, sci-fi writer **Karen Traviss**. Her story takes place 18 months after we last saw the Gears, who are now living aboard a converted aircraft carrier.

2011 INDUCTEES

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CANADA'S
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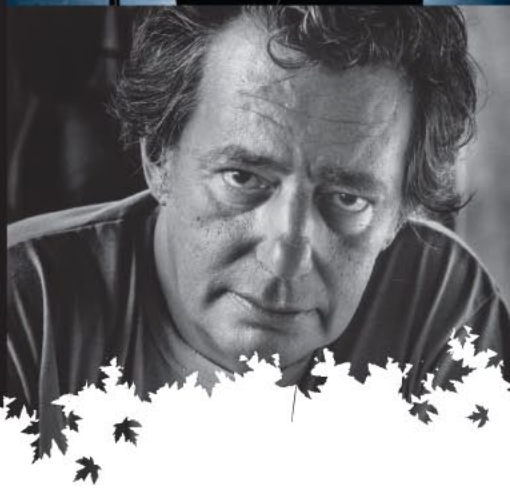

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Global slice

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FINALLY...

UP FOR SALE

Blair Bangerter has watched *Up* about 100 times. Well, not the whole movie. Just the parts pertinent to his latest project, recreating the house from the 2009 animated feature in the Utah neighbourhood of Herriman. With Pixar's blessing, Bangerter Homes — the company he co-owns with his two brothers — copied the house in great detail, from the pitched roofs and crown moldings to the garden hose. "The winters are kind of slow and I just sat down one night and started messing around a little bit, seeing if I could get a house to work," says Bangerter. The asking price is $399,000 (U.S.), which Bangerter admits is about $140,000 more than comparable houses in the neighbourhood. "But it was an expensive house to build," he says. It's also one of a kind. "That was one of the concessions we made to Disney and Pixar," says Bangerter, "that we would never build it again." —*MW*

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